works related to the DELs target for the current year will be completed by 31/3/2002.

(e) There was delay in cable laying due to delay in supply of certain specific sizes of cables from the suppliers.

(f) Not applicable in view of replies to (c) to (e) above.

**Statement**

*Status of pending cable laying works*

| Sl. No. | Contractor's Name | Validity of contract | Zones Awarded | Status/likely date of completion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | M/s B.R. Singh Bhedouria, 05, Deopura, Mainpuri | (a) 05.02.2002 (b) 27.02.2002 | Mainpuri City Zone Bhogaon Zone | (a) Pending/ April, 2002 (b) Pending/ May, 2002 |
| 2. | M/s Light-Electricals Bareilly | (a) 05.02.2002 (b) 21.02.2002 | Mainpuri City Mainpuri Rural | (a) Pending/ April, 2002 (b) Pending/ May, 2002 |

**Delay in commissioning of telephone exchange in Leh**

1928. SHRI KUSHOK THIKSEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the equipment and all other necessary accessories were bought to install the new exchange at Squirbuchan Village of Khalsi Block in Leh District for the last couple of years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the same has not been commissioned till date; and

(c) Government's plan to commission the same and the reasons for the dealy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. An electronic

exchange with 64 lines was installed at Squirbuchan in April, 1998. However, the service could not be provided for want of media. Now the exchange has been replaced by latest digital electronic exchange of 256 lines capacity in February, 2002 and the same is likely to be commissioned on satellite media by 31.5.2002.

**Slashing of bandwidth rates by VSNL**

1929. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) has slashed bandwidth rates by upto 40 percent;

(b) whether reduction in the bandwidth rates would benefit to big companies that are using Internet heavily;

(c) if so, what are the reasons for giving benefit to a particular section of industry; and

(d) whether Government would come forward for package for those using less Internet and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The reduction in the bandwidth rates is applicable to entire spectrum of VSNL bandwidth services i.e. right from 64 Kbps to 155 Mbps and shall benefit all the companies alike. Therefore, question of giving benefit to any particular section of industry or giving any package for those using less internet does not arise.